

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – OFFICE OF DELTA WATERMASTER
JANUARY 19, 2011**

ITEM 12

SUBJECT

INFORMATIONAL REPORT ON THE REASONABLE USE DOCTRINE AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE APPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE TO PROMOTE MORE EFFICIENT USE OF AGRICULTURAL WATER

DISCUSSION

California Water Code Section 85230(d) directs the State's Delta Watermaster (Watermaster) to submit regular reports to the State Water Board on water rights administration, water quality issues, and conveyance operations. The Watermaster has completed a report entitled [*The Reasonable Use Doctrine and Agricultural Water Use Efficiency*](#).

The report addresses how the State's Reasonable Use Doctrine may be employed to promote more efficient water use in the agricultural sector. The report explains how the Reasonable Use Doctrine is the cornerstone to California's complex water rights law and that all water use must be reasonable. It goes on to show that there is a wide array of irrigation practices in place today that result in the more efficient and therefore more reasonable use of water. The report concludes that the Reasonable Use Doctrine may be employed to promote a wider use of such efficient practices. The report recommends that the State Water Board convene a Reasonable Water Use Summit and contains specific recommendations for consideration during the Summit. The recommendations range from a wider employment of efficiency practices such as improvements to the irrigation systems that deliver water to farms, weather-based irrigation scheduling, and more efficient irrigation methods.

POLICY ISSUE

None at this time. Informational Item only.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time. Informational Item only.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

None at this time. Informational Item only.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the State Water Board accept the report and conduct at a future date, a Reasonable Water Use Summit.

State Water Board action on this item will assist the Water Boards in reaching Goal 6 of the Strategic Plan Update, 2008-2012: to enhance consistency across the Water Boards, on an ongoing basis, to ensure our processes are effective, efficient, and predictable, and to promote fair and equitable application of laws, regulations, policies, and procedures.